

UDAF and USDA/NRCS Protect Cache Valley Dairy

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS) announce the conclusion of a joint project that will protect some of Cache County's most valuable farmland. The UDAF and NRCS recently finalized the purchase of a conservation easement on 13.1 acres of land owned by Evan and Ines Olsen in Young Ward, Utah. The farmland is presently used to grow alfalfa to feed the Olsen's dairy cows.

The Olsen Family Dairy, has been in existence since the late 1930's, and is one of several highly productive dairies in the county that sends raw milk to a local cheese processing company.

"I am happy to announce that this is our second joint project with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Cache Valley," said UDAF Commissioner, Cary G. Peterson. "The Olsens are one of many land owners who recognize the importance of protecting their land for future generations," Commissioner Peterson added.

This project joins a similar conservation easement purchase concluded last year with dairy farmers Jon and Ralph Meikle of Smithfield.

The Olsen property is located in the farming community of Young Ward, Utah in Cache County.

The sale of the easement enabled the Olsens to purchase 19 acres of land nearby, that otherwise could be used for residential development. The project helps the dairy protect a source of feed for its animals, and establishes an agriculture buffer zone between it and new homes.

"I have been watching with some concern the accelerating development of residential homes in my area," said Evan Olsen. "This easement helped me generate enough funds to purchase other property that I can use to feed my herd and protect my operation," Olsen added.

The conservation easement was purchased through the UDAF's Critical Agricultural Land Conservation Fund and the USDA's Farm and Ranchland Protection Program. The two agencies combined funds to purchase the

easement from the Olsens. The UDAF contributed \$27,000, the Olsens contributed \$13,500 and the NRCS matched those funds with \$40,500. The total easement purchase price equaled roughly 66 percent of the market value of the land.

This is the UDAF's fifth easement purchase concluded in the past three years. The department has participated in the protection of a total of 226 acres of Utah farmland since 1999.

Conservation easements are a popular tool across the United States to protect dwindling farm and ranchland. They often prohibit any non-agricultural use of the land such as residential development or other uses that are inconsistent with established farming practices in the area. This project is helping the UDAF and Governor Leavitt meet their 1000-day plans to protect 10,000 acres of land each year.

The USDA makes millions of dollars available each year to help communities in various states protect farm and ranch land. In 1998 the State of Utah established the UDAF's Critical Agricultural Land Conservation Fund, and the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund. Both funds help communities plan for growth while helping to protect valuable farming and open land.

For more information about saving farmland and conservation easements, visit: www.ag.utah.gov



The Evan Olsen family recently sold a conservation easement on 13 acres of prime farmland to the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food. The purchase helps The UDAF and Governor Leavitt meet one of their 1000-day plan goals of protecting Utah farmland.

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DR. CHRIS CRNICH NAMED REGULATORY SERVICES DIRECTOR

Utah Commissioner of Agriculture and Food, Cary G. Peterson, today announced the appointment of Dr. Chris Crnich as Director of the Division of Regulatory Services. Dr. Crnich, a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, is currently the Manager of the Division of Animal Industry's Meat and Poultry Inspection program.

"Dr. Crnich has distinguished himself as a highly organized and motivated leader in our department," said Commissioner Peterson. "As the new director of Regulatory Services, he brings those skills that earned him one of the Governor's 'Manager of the Year' awards for the State of Utah," Peterson added. Dr. Crnich's appointment takes affect immediately.

Regulatory Services is responsible for several important consumer-oriented programs such as Food Compliance; Meat, Egg and Poultry Compliance; Dairy Compliance; Weights and Measures; and Labeling and Product Compliance.

"I am extremely honored and thrilled to have been selected for this new and challenging assignment," said Dr. Crnich. "I look forward to working with the many dedicated and professional individuals in Regulatory Services," he added.

Dr. Crnich manages the department's meat and poultry inspection program that has earned the rare U.S. Department of Agriculture Category I status. This program serves as a model for other states.

Since 1982 Dr. Crnich has been the U.S. Air Force's Chief of Military Public Health for the 419th Medical Squadron at Hill Air Force Base. As such, he has gained much experience and knowledge in the field of medical intelligence and disaster preparedness, and participates directly in the department's homeland security and public safety responsibilities. This military/public safety background contributed greatly to the department's successful food safety program during the 2002 Winter Olympics.

He has improved his staff's computer literacy, as well as internal communications that add to the program's ef-

ficiency.

His management style focuses on the well being of his employees. Dr. Crnich went out of his way to locate a training tutor to assist an employee who had a reading impairment. As a result, this employee has significantly increased his oral reading skills as well as his self-confidence.

Dr. Crnich graduated from the University of Utah with a B.A. degree in Biology. He earned a D.V.M. in General Veterinary Medicine and Surgery from Colorado State University. He was the Air Force Reserve's Public Health Officer from 1999 to March of 2002, and has been the manager of the department's Meat and Poultry Inspection Program since 1999.

Dr. Crnich fills the vacancy created in April of 2002 when former Regulatory Services Director, Kyle Stephens, was named department Deputy Commissioner.



Dr. Chris Crnich (left) is congratulated by Commissioner Peterson upon his appointment as Director of Regulatory Services. Dr. Crnich fills the vacancy left when Division Director, Kyle Stephens, was appointed Deputy Commissioner.

Due to some recent changes in personnel and questions regarding basement parking, Deputy Commissioner Kyle Stephens wishes to reiterate the policies regarding basement parking. The assigned parking areas are as follows.

<u>Stall #</u>	<u>Assigned to:</u>
1	Deputy Commissioner
2	Commissioner
3	Administrative Services
4	Adm. Services/State car
5	Regulatory Services
6	Animal Industry
7	Marketing & Conservation
8	Plant Industry
9	Chemistry Lab
10	Overnight/State Car
11	Overnight
12	Overnight
13	Weights & Measures
14	Weights & Measures
15	Weights & Measures
17	DFCM
18	Weights & Measures
19	Weights & Measures
20	DFCM Storage/ Bike Rack

Three parking spaces have been made available for employee use and parking of personal vehicles when overnight travel is required. One is occupied with the state car that is used to take deposits to the bank, etc. If it becomes necessary that all three overnight spots are needed, the State Car will be moved to the outside parking area for that interim use. If all overnight spots are occupied, then employees need to contact their division director for use of the division assigned spot. This approach has been agreed to by the division directors.

Please reserve overnight spaces with the receptionists desk. On overnight parking tag will be issued regarding who has reserved the space, and for the length of time. Upon return, the overnight tag will be returned to the receptionist desk. We have had complaints and difficulty in the past with employees not following through with this request. Division directors and administration will be notified of those not complying with the request/reservation requirements. Failure to help us monitor and control use of the overnight parking spaces may result in forfeiture for future use. Please contact Deputy Commissioner Kyle Stephens with any questions.

BUS PASSES

Beginning in January, UTA bus passes will be offered to all UDAF employees for \$5.00 for 2003 (limit of 80 passes). This is intended to encourage employees to ride the bus or TRAX to and from work. Utah County commuters who ride their private bus will be offered a \$25.00 credit toward their commuting costs.